

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP  
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE  
MEETING  
PARTNERSHIP OFFICE  
23 Royce Circle**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2016**

**3:00 PM**

**MINUTES**

Present: Fran Archambault, Mona Friedland, Matt Hart, Paul Shapiro, and Bill Simpson

Guest: Mike Switchenko

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm

**1. Call to Order**

Matt Hart called the meeting to order at 3:05 in Chair Tom Callahan's absence.

**2. Approval of Finance and Administration Committee Minutes from December 17, 2015**

Paul Shapiro made a motion to approve the minutes of December 17, 2015. Bill Simpson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

**3. Recommendation of Mike Switchenko to Finance and Administration Committee**

Mike Switchenko introduced himself for the benefit of Committee members not at the last meeting. He works with former Committee member Mark Hammond at Stifel Nicolaus and grew up in Mansfield. Committee members introduced themselves.

Mr. Simpson made a motion to recommend to the Partnership Board of Directors that Mike Switchenko be appointed to the Finance and Administration Committee. Mr. Shapiro seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

**4. Review of December 31, 2015 Financials**

Ms. van Zelm reviewed the December 31, 2015 Financials. She noted that the UConn annual contribution to the Partnership had been made since the

December 31, 2015 financial report. She said the Town made its first quarterly payment.

Ms. van Zelm said the annual membership appeal is underway and \$8,790 has been collected thus far toward the \$15,000 budget.

Ms. van Zelm said she will be seeking three quotes for insurance in March per the Town's new fiscal guidelines. Shortly after, the budget should be finalized for additional review by the Committee and then the Board.

With respect to expenditures, Ms. van Zelm expects attorney fees to be less at the end of the fiscal year, but professional and technical fees to be more due to the hiring of Francine Christiansen to assist with the Partnership's strategic plan.

Ms. van Zelm said the two outstanding Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grants for Dog Lane/Storrs Road and Wilbur Cross Way should be closed out shortly. She said the Town Public Works staff has provided all the information needed by the CDOT on the other funded Storrs Road work (funded through the State Urban Act Grant). She said the Town Finance Dept. will be requesting a drawdown on the \$3 million infrastructure budget (in exchange for the abatement) from EdR once CDOT has finalized all paperwork with the Town on Storrs Road.

Mr. Archambault made a motion to approve the December 31, 2015 financials. Mr. Shapiro seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

## **5. Update on Storrs Center**

Ms. van Zelm said Tea More Café, NICABM, Salt, and Pearl should open in the March/April timeframe. The estimate for Kathmandu Kitchen is May.

She said 29 of the 42 town homes and condominiums in Main Street Homes have been sold. The first set of townhomes should be ready to open next week. Master developer LeylandAlliance has opened a sales office with its agent Weichert Realtors on Wilbur Cross Way, by appointment only.

Mr. Hart updated the Committee on the status of a brew pub. He said it is a lengthy process to obtain the approval for the manufacture of alcohol in Mansfield given the past history of how changes to allowing alcoholic beverages in Mansfield have occurred.

Mr. Hart said 10 percent of the voters would need to sign a petition to allow for brew pubs to be put on a ballot to be considered by the electorate.

He said the Economic Development Commission will be continuing to review next steps at its meeting tonight. Mr. Shapiro said he looks forward to their feedback.

Mr. Shapiro asked if a brew pub would require a change to the Storrs Center Special Design District (SC-SDD) regulations. Ms. van Zelm said it is currently not an allowed use in the SC-SDD regulations.

Mr. Hart said the Town responded to a bid request for solar for some of its buildings including the parking garage.

He said the tax appeal on Storrs Center property by Hart Realty Advisers is in the pre-trial stage; one hearing in court has been held thus far. Mr. Hart has heard concerns from some businesses. He said the sales price and rents do affect the taxes.

Mr. Hart said the Region 19 School District has approached UConn about purchasing E.O. Smith High School and Farrell Field. He said there is the potential for UConn to make space available at the UConn Depot campus. He said the District is targeting a November referendum date. Mr. Hart said the Town Council has expressed concern about how a potential departure of the High School from downtown will affect Storrs Center and the Farrell Field neighborhood.

Mr. Hart suggested that the Partnership Board of Directors review whether it wants to submit comments on the proposal. The issue of compatibility of any proposal on the High School site with the surrounding downtown and neighborhoods should be evaluated.

## **6. Update on Strategic Planning Process**

Ms. van Zelm said Francine Christiansen of Christiansen Consulting has been hired to assist the Partnership with its strategic plan. Ms. Christiansen has met with the Board and a Partnership ad hoc steering committee. She is also speaking with several stakeholders including the property owners downtown, residents, and the High School, among others.

Mr. Archambault asked about Ms. Christiansen's contract and hours to work on the plan. Ms. van Zelm will send to the Committee via e-mail.

Ms. van Zelm said she is hoping to have the various committees involved in the process. Mr. Hart said the Finance and Administration Committee will have a very important role as the funding of the Partnership is an important issue.

## **7. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.

*Minutes taken by Cynthia van Zelm*